



# VALUE EDUCATION A CONTINUOUS PROCESS FOR SOCIAL RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A STUDY ON 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS IN NADIA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

Values are part and parcel of the philosophy of a nation and its educational system. The modern materialistic world raises our standard of living but declines the values of our life. The erosion of value from human life leads pupil towards low and dark dimensions of his consciousness. In recent decades the basic environment in which children experience major developmental changes has suddenly shifted from a natural to an urban one. Lacking contact with the nature damages learners' free thinking. Value education makes a very important strong positive relationship, positive dispositions to learning, capacity for reflection, self management and self knowledge towards environment. Inculcation of value education for sustainability concerns whole system thinking, which is a framework for seeing the whole picture, for establishing interrelationship and understanding phenomena as an integrated whole. It provides an opportunity to explore novel approaches that reintegrates knowledge and that transcendent the traditional boundaries in a unique one. Values and responsibilities are some important aspects of these relationships. The value-belief-norm aspects aim to create a conceptual framework of environmentally significant behaviour. Development of environmental value for social resilience and environmental sustainability is a continuous process. It explores the possibility to regenerate environmental value for social resilience and environmental sustainability.

**KEY WORDS:** Environmental Education, environmental value, sustainability, social resilience.

## 1. INTRODUCTION.

Values are part and parcel of the philosophy of a nation and its educational system. They are the guiding principles of life which are conducive to all round development. These days we are all surrounded by gross consumerism and an aggressive rush for self fulfilment. In recent decades the basic environment in which children experience major developmental changes has suddenly shifted from a natural to an urban one; from outdoor to indoor (Louv, 2005). Instead of playing in fields, chasing lizards, protect them and also keep up this green from technological advancements, learner are increasingly passing their childhoods indoor, stimulated by technology. Lacking contact with the nature caused by technology, over protectionism, urbanization, absence of naturalistic inquiry damage learners' free thinking. The current trends towards indoor, technology-based entertainment result in problems in the areas of attention, behaviour, school achievement, self-discipline, loneliness and depression (Zaradic, 2008). This alienation from nature gives birth of 'nature-deficit-disorder' (Louv, 2005). Result absence of environmental responsibility.

Values as for defining Environmental Education for sustainability provides ".....the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable" (Halstead et. al., 2000). Value education makes a very important strong positive relationship, positive dispositions to learning, capacity for reflection, self management and self knowledge.

Environmental values include living harmoniously within ecological systems, developing a caring, responsible attitude toward nature, and promoting a sense of continuity and community with other people and all living things. Environmental values are reflected through the manifestation of 'social and civic responsibility' & environmental responsibility. Social and civic responsibility enhance the value for community, specifically- "Interpersonal cooperation and social responsibility are encouraged" (Curriculum Council, 1998).

Environmental responsibility indicates development of a significant emotional and transcendent behaviour with value-belief-norm aspect in a holistic way, which can produce environmentally sensitive citizenry.

Environmental Education is an education *for, in & about* the environment. Recently the emphasis in Environmental Education has involved upon '*for*' approach. Education for "..... Promotes critical reflection.....lifestyle changes that are more compatible with sustainability. It seeks to build capacity for active participation" (Tilbury et. al., 2005a). Education for the environment empowers peoples and provides learners with skills to take positive actions so that the current and future generations have a critical understanding how complex systems, such as environment & ecosystems, economic & socio-political systems work (Tilbury et al., 2005a). This '*for*' approach is related with the cultivation of environmental values (Graltion et al., 2004).

Inculcation of value and education for sustainability concern '*whole system thinking*' (Lewis & Baudains, 2007; Sterling, 2003b). This system acknowledges the relationship between '*Education for sustainability & Value education*'.

Whole system thinking is a framework for seeing the whole picture, for establishing interrelationship and understanding phenomena as an integrated whole (Capra, et.al., 1996). It provides an opportunity to explore novel approaches that reintegrates knowledge and that transcendent the traditional boundaries in a unique one.

Values and responsibilities are some important aspects of these relationships. (Sterling, 2003a) argues that ".....we are educated by & large to 'complete & consume' rather than to 'care & conserve'. Further he also mentioned - because of the imposition of managerial & economic values on education we have lost touch with the social values and real life contexts of authentic education (Sterling, 2003a). To overcome this situation several participatory activities must be organised to engage the students in whole systems thinking.

Value education and environmental education for sustainability are reciprocally acted with each other. This paper provides an overview of value education from environmental education perspective for bringing social resilience and environmental sustainability. The positive changes in pro-environmental behaviour i.e. changes in attitude about waste disposal among 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in selected schools in Nadia district, West Bengal, India indicate the effectiveness of value education as a process for social resilience and environmental sustainability.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To find out the existing environmental behaviour among 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in some selected schools in Nadia district, West Bengal, India on waste disposal
- To find out the changes in pro-environmental behaviour on waste disposal as an indication of social resilience and environmental sustainability

## 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

**Study Area:** The study area includes selected schools in parts of Nadia district, West Bengal, India. In selecting schools different localities and gender is taken into consideration. Four schools are included for the study among them two schools from each gender. Regarding locality two schools from rural areas and two schools from urban areas are taken for study. Only 11<sup>th</sup> grade students of Bengali medium schools from urban and rural areas form the basis of the study.

**Sampling:** The present research work is carried out under non-probability sampling technique. For this purpose *purposive sampling method* is followed for sample selection. The purpose of the present work is to find out the changes in attitude of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students' towards waste, and its improper disposal. Researcher used *random sampling method* more specifically, by using *random number table* for selection of different schools of Nadia district, West Bengal, India. A total number of 201 students consists the sample size for the study.

**Methodology:** For the present study researcher has used standardized questionnaire for data collection. It consists of a series of questions based on environ-

mental education related aspect especially waste and its improper disposal. A total number of 20 positive questions are used. Likert type scale is used for data collection.

After a brief discussion on waste and its disposal system the questionnaire is distributed among the students for obtaining the existing knowledge on waste disposal. The students are given 45 minutes to complete the task. Once the task is completed the students were exposed to a video film on waste and waste disposal system. They were again allowed to a brief interaction on waste and waste disposal. The same set of questionnaire is re-administered to obtain the change their existing knowledge on waste and waste disposal.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

**Table 4.1 Summary table of collected data on total students**

Gender	Before watching the video			After watching the video		
	N	M	S.D.	N	M	S.D.
Total Boys	93	83.4	7.3	93	91	5.2
Total Girls	108	85	8.2	108	90.6	6.53
Total	201			201		

Source: Compiled from primary survey data

Table 4.1 shows the total number of students (N), the mean value (M) and standard deviation SD( $\sigma$ ). From the table (4.1) it is observed that the mean value (M) has increased for both the gender (boys and girls) after exposure to the video while the standard deviation (SD) has decreased for both the cases. The same trend is observed for both rural and urban areas. It could be discerned from the observed value that the exposure of students to video has to some extent changed their taken-for-granted frame of reference towards waste and its disposal systems.

**Fig 4.1 Attitudinal scores of the total boys towards waste disposal**

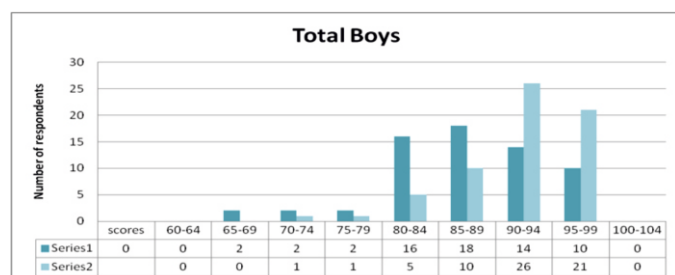


Fig.4.1 represents changes of attitude between before and after application of the video of total boys. More specifically changes are prominent in the class interval of 90-94(14-26) and 95-99(10-21) while there is a no substantial change in the lower class interval.

**Fig.4.2 Attitudinal scores of the total girls towards waste disposal**

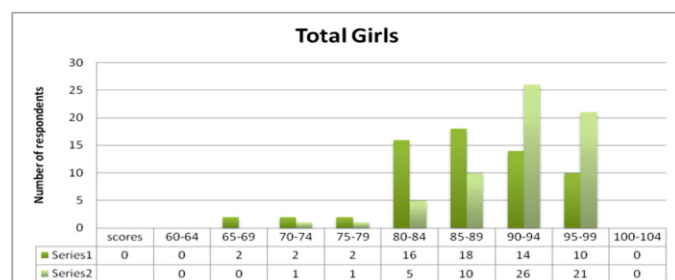


Fig.4.2 represents changes of attitude between before and after application of the video of total girls. More specifically changes are prominent in the class interval of 90-94(14-26) and 95-99(10-21) while there is a no substantial change in the lower class interval.

The result suggests that there is a positive change irrespective of gender and location which indicates a potential change in behaviour of the students who will be able to take appropriate decision related to environment. The value-belief-norm aspects aim to create a conceptual framework of environmentally significant behaviour. It attempts to discover the casual variables that direct a person towards pro-environmental behaviours and describes four major factors, e.g. attitudinal, contextual, personal capabilities and habit. Although the time period is inadequate to develop such value oriented responsible behaviour yet experiential shifts in awareness are likely to play a major role in individual future decision making process (Khan, 2017) which is related to social resilience and environmental sustainability. Development of environmental value for social resilience and environmental sustainability is a continuous process and will be more effective

with continuous environmental experience acquired through value-belief-norms aspects of the natural environment.

#### 5. CONCLUSION:

Environmental education influences an individual's response to pro-environmental behaviour. Existing curriculum of environmental education at school level has deterred to develop environmental values. Positive changes in humanity's treatment of the environment may not be possible until environmental experiences should be based on value-belief-norm aspect and should be conveyed continuously for social resilience and environmental sustainability. The study clearly demonstrates development of possible value oriented behaviour if environmental exposure can be continuously presented among the young generation. It explores the possibility to regenerate environmental value for social resilience and environmental sustainability.

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